

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended): A method of producing a polarizing plate, comprising the step of laminating a pair of curled protective sheets, said protective sheets having an intrinsic tendency to curl in respective curling directions, onto opposite surfaces of a polarizer respectively so that respective curling directions of said pair of curled protective sheets are reverse to each other, wherein said pair of curled protective sheets have a laminating index L of not higher than 60 when the laminating index L is given by the expression:

$$\underline{L = (a - b)/a \times 100}$$

in which a and b are quantities of curl in said pair of protective sheets respectively on the assumption of a > b.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Original): A method of producing a polarizing plate according to claim 1, wherein concave curled surfaces of said pair of protective sheets are opposed to each other.

4. (Currently amended): A method of producing a polarizing plate according to claim ~~2~~ 1, wherein concave curled surfaces of said pair of protective sheets are opposed to each other.

5. (Currently amended): A method of producing a polarizing plate according to claim ~~2~~ 1, wherein the laminating index L is not higher than 40.

6. (Original): A polarizing plate produced by a method defined in claim 1.
7. (Original): A composite polarizing plate comprising a polarizing plate defined in claim 6 and an optical layer laminated on said polarizing plate.
8. (Previously presented): An image display device using at least one polarizing plate defined in claim 6.
9. (Original): An image display device using at least one composite polarizing plate defined in claim 7.
10. (Currently amended): A polarizing plate comprising a polarizer, and a pair of protective sheets laminated onto opposite surfaces of said polarizer respectively, wherein each of said protective sheets has an intrinsic tendency to curl, such that curling directions of said pair of protective sheets would be reverse to each other upon separation if said pair of protective sheets were separated from said polarizing plate, wherein said pair of curled protective sheets have a laminating index L of not higher than 60 when the laminating index L is given by the expression:
- $$L = (a - b)/a \times 100$$
- in which a and b are quantities of curl in said pair of protective sheets respectively on the assumption of a > b.
11. (Original): A composite polarizing plate comprising a polarizing plate defined in claim 10 and an optical layer laminated on said polarizing plate.
12. (Original): An image display device using at least one polarizing plate defined in 10.

13. (Original): An image display device using at least one composite polarizing plate defined in claim 11.

14. (Previously presented): A method of producing a polarizing plate according to claim 1, wherein the protective sheets are adhered to the polarizer through an adhesive layer.

15. (Previously presented): A method of producing a polarizing plate according to claim 14, wherein the adhesive is a pressure-sensitive adhesive.

16. (Previously presented): A polarizing plate according to claim 10, wherein the protective sheets are adhered to the polarizer through an adhesive.

17. (Previously presented): A polarizing plate according to claim 16, wherein the adhesive is a pressure-sensitive adhesive.